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TRANSLATED SPECIMENS

OF

WELSH POETRY

IN

ENGLISH VERSE.

WITH SOME ORIGINAL PIECES
AND NOTES.

By JOHN WALTERS, B. A.

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TO THE
HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND,
SHUTE BARRINGTON,
LORD BISHOP OF LANDAFF,
THE FOLLOWING POEMS,
PREVIOUSLY DISTINGUISHED BY SOME
SHARE OF HIS PRIVATE APPROBATION,
AND NOW HONOURED WITH HIS PUBLIC
COURTESY,
ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY
PRESENTED AND INSCRIBED.



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T H E

P R E F A C E.

TH E diminutive size of this pamphlet of poetry, now offered to the public, seems to demand an apology: such, at least, will be the expectation of those critical readers, who are careful to number the lines of a poem and the pages of a book. The comparatively few who read with taste, think it a higher praise to write a few things well, than to write many things indifferently. If I am so fortunate as to earn this praise in the execution of my little work, I will gladly thank the good-natured critic who shall fasten his censure on its brevity, and reckon that its distinguishing imperfection.

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 LEWELLIN AND HIS BARDS.

IN Mona's groves, whose savage glooms
 Close thick o'er ruin'd fanes and tombs,
 Which, from the world secluded far,
 Ne'er echoed to the voice of war ;
 In fair Aberfraw's princely towers
 Lewellin wore the joyless hours.
 On each new scene, whate'er he chose,
 The banquet or his short repose,
 The form of captive Ellen stole,
 And sadden'd all his mighty soul:
 Two rival bards contending came,
 And tun'd the harp's harmonious frame ;
 They trac'd him to a druid grove,
 The refuge of despairing love.
 Fam'd Lygad first, to rouse his lord,
 Told all the fame his dreadful sword
 Had won, and how a youth he rose,
 And vanquish'd his surrounding foes.

Brave prince, from ancient Beli sprung,
 Thou darling theme of Cambria's tongue
 Brave prince, immortal gifts are mine,
 And skill of poetry divine

B

(Each

(Each gift the good and wise approve,
 That gift descendeth from above).
 Ah ! never to despondence yield !
 Prayer is misfortune's sevenfold shield.
 Son of the sylvan boar, behold,
 Thy future triumphs I unfold.
 But first with haughty Edward's fall
 Thy youthful conquests I recall,
 The clash of swords, the buckler's ring,
 The fore defeat of Loigria's king,
 When wondering Menai's silver flood
 Was stain'd with streams of crimson blood,
 And list'ning Arvon's rocky shore
 Responsive swell'd the battle's roar.
 On came thy bands arousing fears
 Quick as the lightning of their spears :
 Like waves alternate on the shore
 Roll'd the ranks that stream'd with gore.
 Lewellin, such thy former deeds ;
 A longer, nobler train succeeds.
 But if with love's inglorious flame,
 Forgetful of thy better fame,
 Thy eagle heart inactive pine,
 And Cambria to her fate resign—
 Ah Heaven ! what fatal gloom appears
 To darken thy retiring years !
 O'er distant Vaga's fable stream
 I hear the hovering raven scream !

Breaker of shields, assert thy throne,
And fame and empire are thine own.

Won by the Bard's persuasive skill,
Lewellin felt his alter'd will :
He felt, and scarce could Love control
The new-born ardour of his soul.

Sound the golden lyre again,
Strike once more that magic strain,
At which my heart transported bounds.
As when the horn of battle sounds.
Lift the lay, and strike the string
That wak'd the soul of Gwyneth's king,
Who set his captive warriors free,
And led them on to victory.
Kindle, bard, the sacred fire
That sleeps, and call forth all the lyre,
Within whose deep mysterious cells
The spirit of enchantment dwells.
Edward, thy fierce revenge I see !
Why dealt my lance a wound to thee ?
Or why could find no vital part,
Nor welter in thy cruel heart ?
Thrice fatal, tho' victorious day !
Unseen, repentance and dismay
Lurk'd in thy rear : the wounds I gave
Return upon me, vainly brave.
Edward, at length thy pride appears,
Too real were my boding fears.

In forests bred a savage beast,
 Thou ne'er hast tasted woman's breast,
 I hear with mingled rage and pain
 Thy threats, thy terms of high disdain;
 I see thy dark ungenerous art,
 And wrath inflames my swelling heart.
 Poet of the lofty strain,
 Strike the sounding lyre again.

Yes, warlike prince! from Heaven descend
 The numbers of thy loyal friend.
 Mean is my garb, yet on my tongue
 Dwells the immortal gift of song.
 Chief of the golden-border'd shield,
 Forsake not glory's martial field:
 Terror of land, and sea, and skies,
 Dark eagle of the north, arise!
 In peace thy Cambria's guiding star,
 Her anchor in the storm of war.
 Each doubt of Ellen's faith remove,
 For jealousy's the bane of love.
 Watch'd by Heaven's unsleeping eye,
 Her charms the power of lust defy.
 Thine be the prize, those peerless charms;
 Oh! snatch her from the tyrant's arms.
 See, Edward, trembling on thy throne,
 The march of Mona's dragon son,
 Whose dread return shall soon destroy
 Thy carols of triumphant joy.

Brave

Brave warriors wait his wide command,
 And death still issues from his hand :
 Confusion and despair inclose
 Lewellin's fierce perfidious foes ;
 Before his face they fleet away
 Like spectres at the glimpse of day.
 Where, champions, may ye now be found?
 Pierc'd deep with many a grizly wound
 Bleaching ye lie, and ghastly pale,
 In bleak December's frosty gale.
 Adorn'd once more with warlike mail,
 Lewellin, princely hero, hail !
 The Saxon host thy sword shall quell :
 Thy power prophetic bards foretel :
 All Britain shall again be ours !
 And in the fair Brigantian towers
 To Ellen, then no longer coy,
 Thy partner of imperial joy,
 And Cambria's maids, for beauty sung,
 The harp of Cambria shall be strung.
 Bend, lion heart, thy shining bow,
 And fire the castles of the foe.
 See, thy steeds exulting prance,
 Lift aloft thy lightning lance,
 Pierce the squadrons, break the bands,
 And with thy red victorious hands
 Tear the trappings, strip the car
 And all the ornaments of war,

The banners won with bleeding toils,
 And deck thy palace with the spoils.
 Enraptur'd bards with praiseful songs
 Shall hail thee in a hundred tongues :
 And when the lord of Arvon's shore
 Is hail'd with songs and harps no more—
 Know, prince of Cambria, in the grave
 Golden slumbers wait the brave;
 When time's great period shall arrive,
 As bards the lore of Druids give,
 And yawning elements unfold
 The hoary depths of ocean old,
 They from the wreck of worlds shall rise
 Serene, and dwell among the skies.

The caves of Arvon o'er the main
 Answer'd the inspiring strain.
 With great delight and scorn of fate
 The lord of Mona listening sat :
 In each new strain new rapture came,
 And kindled high the struggling flame;
 To grasp his weapon's hilt he tried,
 But swordless was the hero's side;
 Then had he rush'd to seek the foe,
 But, list! he hears a sound of woe.

Stay, generous chief, Lewellin, stay!
 Thy Gronow wakes the plaintive lay.
 God too hath pour'd upon my tongue
 The deep and wondrous gift of song.

Ah!

Ah! think, the wounds thou dealest, all
 On Ellen's captive charms must fall.
 If thou revenge, shall Ellen live?
 Or Edward thy success forgive?
 Bright as the bursting wave was she
 Who crost the bursting wave for thee.
 Fair flower of France, a captive's doom
 Is hers, to blight her virgin bloom.
 From rich Montargis' holy walls
 She comes, for her Lewellin calls.
 Loud the storm, and rough the wave;
 Thee she implores thy love to save.
 Ah! cruel were the bleak winds shrill;
 But still more cruel Edward's will;
 But thou of all most cruel far
 If ruthless thou resolve on war:
 For in the hour thy armies rise,
 Prince, in that hour thy Ellen dies.

When in Lewellin's wounded ear
 All woeful thrill'd a name so dear,
 Ah! then arose the sudden sigh,
 The tear stood trembling in his eye:
 Gronow had wak'd with softest art
 The deep affections of his heart.

Oh bards! the tortur'd chief returns,
 My breast with varying passion burns.
 Fond hope the ties of duty rends,
 The lover with the king contends.

For

For ah! my Ellen, sweetest maid
That ever was by truth betray'd,
Ah! from thy lover absent long,
Thy loss is like the funeral song.
Poet of the mournful strain,
Touch the trembling lyre again.

ODE

O D E T O C A M B R I A.

CAMBRIA, I love thy genius bold ;
 Thy dreadful rites, and Druids old ;
 Thy bards who struck the sounding strings,
 And wak'd the warlike souls of kings ;
 Those kings who, prodigal of breath,
 Rush'd furious to the fields of death ;
 Thy maids for peerless beauty crown'd,
 In songs of ancient fame renown'd,
 Pure as the gem of Arvon's caves,
 Bright as the foam of Menai's waves,
 With sunny locks and jetty eyes,
 Of valour's deeds the glorious prize,
 Who tam'd to love's refin'd delight
 Those chiefs invincible in fight.
 Thy sparkling horns I next recall
 In many a hospitable hall
 Circling with haste, whose boundless mirth
 To many an amorous lay gave birth,
 And many a present to the fair,
 And many a deed of bold despair.
 I love thy harps with well-rank'd strings,
 Hear'd in the stately halls of kings,

C

Whose

Whose sounds had magic to bestow
 Or sunny joy, or dusky woe.
 I love thy fair Silurian vales
 Fann'd by Sabrina's temperate gales,
 That fir'd the Roman to engage
 The scythed cars of Arvirage.
 Oft in the visionary skies
 I see thy ancient Genius rise,
 Who mounts the chariot of the wind,
 And leaves our mortal steeds behind;
 And while to rouse the drooping land
 He strikes the harp with glowing hand,
 Light spirits with aërial wings
 Dance upon the trembling strings.
 Oh, lead me thou in strains sublime
 Thy sacred hill of oaks to climb,
 To haunt thy old poetic streams,
 And sport in fiction's fairy dreams,
 There set the rover Fancy free,
 And breathe the soul of poesy!
 To think upon thy ravish'd crown,
 Thy warlike deeds of old renown;
 Thy valiant sons at Maelor slain,
 The stubborn fight of Bangor's plain,
 A thousand banners waving high
 Where bold Tal Moilvre meets the sky!

Nor feldom, Cambria, I explore
 Thy treasures of poetic store,
 And mingle with thy tuneful throng,
 And range thy realms of ancient song,
 That like thy mountains, huge and high,
 Lifts its broad forehead to the sky;
 Whence Druid fanes of fabling time,
 And ruin'd castles frown sublime,
 Down whose dark sides torn rocks resound,
 Eternal tempests whirling round;
 With many a pleasant vale between,
 Where Nature smiles attir'd in green,
 Where Innocence in cottage warm
 Is shelter'd from the passing storm,
 Stretch'd on the banks of lulling streams
 Where Fancy lies indulging dreams,
 Where shepherds tend their fleecy train,
 Where echoes oft the pleading strain
 Of rural lovers. O'er my soul
 Such varied scenes in vision roll,
 Whether, O prince of bards, I see
 The fire of Greece reviv'd in thee,
 That like a deluge bursts away;
 Or Taliesin tune the lay;
 Or thou, wild Merlin, with thy song
 Pour thy ungovern'd soul along;

Or those perchance of later age
 More artful swell their measur'd rage,
 Sweet bards whose love-taught numbers suit
 Soft measures and the Lesbian lute;
 Whether, Iolo, myrtle-crown'd,
 Thy harp such amorous verse resound
 As love's and beauty's prize hath won;
 Or led by Gwilim's plaintive son,
 I hear him teach his melting tale
 In whispers to the grove and gale.

But since thy once harmonious shore
 Resounds th' inspiring strain no more,
 That snatch'd, in fields of ancient date,
 The palm from number, strength, and fate;
 Since to thy groves no more belong
 The sacred eulogies of song;
 Since thou hast rued the waste of age,
 And war, and Scoln's fiercer rage;—
 Thy spirit of renown expires,
 The brave example of thy fires
 Is lost; thy high heroic crest
 Oblivion and inglorious rest
 Have torn with rude rapacious hand;
 And apathy usurps the land.
 Lo! silent as the lapse of time
 Sink to the earth thy towers sublime;

Where

Where whilom harp'd the minstrel throng,
 The night-owl pours her feral song :
 For ever sinks blest Cambria's fame,
 By ignorance, and sword, and flame
 Laid with the dust, amidst her woes
 The taunt of her ungenerous foes ;
 For ever sleeps her warlike praise,
 Her wealth, dominion, language, lays.

N E S T,

NEST, the Daughter of HOWEL:

A N E L E G Y.

By EINION, the Son of GWALCHMAI.

Written about the Year 1240.

THE spring returns, the hills are green,
 The forest blooms, the sea serene
 Ebbs with hollow-sounding tide,
 But when will Einion's grief subside?
 Chaunt the birds to cheer the plain,
 But Einion breathes a mournful strain.
 Falling like my feeble lay
 The wind now gently dies away.
 By Teivi's deep romantic stream
 Sorrowing with slow steps I came.
 The praise of dying Nest I sung,
 Her name still trembles on my tongue.
 With joyless heart and tearful eye
 To tune her sacred dirge I try.

Like

Like fair Elivri's was her fame,
 And thousands have ador'd her name.
 In silence now the matchless maid
 Low in her last abode is laid,
 Who sprung from royal ancestry;
 Keen as the hawk's her dazzling eye.
 In silken robe bright Cadvan's maid
 On blue Difunni's banks array'd,
 Short time, but lov'd and virtuous, liv'd,
 Nor hath my heart her loss surviv'd;
 My heart, that hear'd her bards complain,
 And died within me at the strain.
 Tyrant Death, thou ruthless foe,
 At last thy fatal power I know.
 Ah! generous Nest, of soul benign,
 How different is my fate from thine!
 I left to struggle with my woes,
 Thou peaceful in thy last repose!
 Weary of life, and robb'd of rest,
 I store long sorrow in my breast.
 Thy lov'd remembrance ne'er shall part
 From weeping Einion's faithful heart.
 Still to my view the veil of death
 Is present, and the form beneath,
 Those features of unrival'd hue,
 Bright as heaven's ambrosial dew

New-fal'n on Aran's sky-topt brow,
Or wild Eryri's cliffs of snow.

By martyrs, and the virgin's claim,
By holy Dewi's fainted name,
By angels of the good and fair,
Trembling I lift my humble prayer,
Which to the throne of Heaven will fly
Auspicious, and to thee, Most High,
That the dear maid, undoom'd to pain,
Near thy right hand a seat may gain.
Thou ne'er wilt banish beauteous Nest
From the bright mansions of the blest.

THE PRAISES
OF LEWELLIN the GREAT,
the Son of JORWERTH.

HE who the glorious sun display'd,
And the pale moon in light array'd,
Give me, of poesy inspir'd,
To be with Merlin's genius fir'd,
And like Aneirin, in the day
He sung his fam'd Gododin's lay,
To celebrate my chiefs, and sing
The praise of Gwyneth's prosp'rous king,
Whose fame hath o'er the region spread
Like mountain Breithin's circling shade.
A hero, matchless in his might,
Who drives the Saxon host to flight;
Skilful to rein the foaming steed,
And urge the chace with flying speed
(His steed that breasts the roaring flood
Of ancient Deva dyed with blood);
A statesman, prudent to assuage
Th' unreas'ning crowd's unbridled rage;
Gentle in peace, but flaming far
A dreadful thunderbolt in war.

D

His

His foes impatient to destroy,
 He gives the warlike shout with joy,
 At his advance can aught avail,
 Or helm, or shield, or twisted mail?
 Or countless host, or vaunted name,
 Abate his boundless thirst of fame?
 Clogg'd with the slaughter of his sword,
 Green Teivi blush'd, smooth Cledau roar'd.
 At Snowdon's hill, and Conway's flood,
 He bath'd his blade in Saxon blood:
 Returning thence o'er Menai's stream,
 Red conquest on his sword, he came.
 Faln are his foes, or scatter'd wide
 Like leaves upon the mountain's side,
 When the hurricane descends
 And all the sounding forest rends:
 A feast for wolves they fell in fight,
 Torn youthful from the nuptial rite:
 Each snow-white breast, each treffy head
 The purple-streaming gore o'erspread.
 Now the sea the corse laves
 Floating on their bed of waves.
 His squadrons, like the prancing steed,
 Victorious trample o'er the dead,
 Point their lances, court the strife,
 And onward rush profuse of life,

Where

Where thronging thick with horrid roar
The steeds of ocean beat the shore.

Around, where-e'er we turn our eyes,
His riches and his realms arise :
Nor fruitless is the poet's strain,
Nor seeks his large relief in vain.
Beneath his banners to his bards
Lewellin deals his rich rewards,
Like generous Rytherch to bestow,
Like Howel to defy the foe :
Oft to his friends his bounty flows,
Despair the portion of his foes.
To combat, see ! before his car
Rush onward the wild dogs of war,
Fierce as the wave on Talgarth's shore !
But when the bleeding strife is o'er,
Then as with harps his halls resound,
He sends the mead in horns around,
To tuneful bards and warriors bold
The green-wrought hirlas tipt with gold ;
Curious art the handle twines,
Smooth as the glossy wave it shines.

The dawn appear'd, the shout was given
That to the echoing vault of heaven
Arose, and rock'd, beneath, the ground :
The foe stood trembling at the sound.

here

D 2

When

When on Plinlimmon's hoary side
 Young Titan beam'd in orient pride,
 The chief impell'd his rattling car
 Amid the boistrous waves of war.
 Anxious I saw with sore dismay
 The conflict of the doubtful day,
 His shiver'd spear, his batter'd shield,
 His wounds in Emlyn's dreadful field:
 Courage from high his heart inform'd;
 The task of hundreds one perform'd.
 Then mid the valleys rich with grain,
 No valleys then, but hills of slain,
 In the battle's front he stood
 Cover'd o'er with dust and blood.
 Him, him a thousand harps resound,
 As Mochnant's mighty prince renown'd,
 Nor shrinking from the deathful blow,
 Nor vaunting o'er the vanquish'd foe.

THE ODE OF THE MONTHS,
TO SIR GRIFFITH LOYD.

BY GWILIM, the BLACK BARD
OF ARVON.

Written about the Year 1322.

O Wretched land! O wayward fate!
How naked and forlorn our state!
Bereft of every human aid,
As when the Saviour was betray'd!
May's pleasant month in woe is past,
And June's fair season seems our last.
Our hopes are now for ever gone,
Nor can the crimson sword be drawn;
The crimson sword of Griffith's side,
Once brandish'd high, and wasting wide.
Our captive chiefs indignant mourn;
To Cambria they no more return!
Our native bards the tyrant lord
Hath banish'd from the festal board:

Their

Their office and their ancient fame
 Is now a vain and empty name.
 Nor in the palace, nor the field,
 With sceptre arm'd, or bossy shield,
 But chain'd, and in the prison's bound,
 Lost Cambria's foremost chief is found :
 His patron hand no more sustains
 The poets of a hundred plains.
 My heart, oppress'd with age and care,
 Pierc'd by the lance of dark despair,
 Must part with all that once was dear :
 One joyless Lent involves the year.
 Sad Gwilim soon shall be forgot,
 And long repose shall be his lot,
 The common fate that waits the brave,
 The narrow mansion of the grave.
 My country ! like the shatter'd bark,
 On shelving cliffs the surges dark
 Have dash'd thee, wreck'd thee o'er the strand,
 The plunder of each vulgar hand.
 Cambria, thy ancient glory ends,
 To Edward's throne all Britain bends !
 Since fate hath snatch'd thy promis'd lord,
 The axe of battle, and the sword,
 Once gleaming like the torch's blaze,
 Thy warlike arm no longer sways.

Thy

Thy spear, adorn'd with hostile gore,
Which once thy kings victorious bore,
As by some wizard's viewless wand,
Falls sudden from thy nerveless hand.
No palace opes its lofty gate,
Its chambers of imperial state;
No princely board with warrior bands
And bards of fame encircled stands,
The stranger left to roam the heath,
And struggle there with want and death.
Behold by cruel hands expire
The orphan babe and sonless sire!
From the lost land affection flies,
And courage sinks, and friendship dies,
The soul of patriot virtue fails,
And universal vice prevails.
No hand, no voice our doom recalls:
The towering strength of Mona falls,
Set is the sun of Arvon's shore,
That hopes a native lord no more.

The day that gave the dire decree,
That Cambria must no more be free—
When on that day my sad thoughts roll,
Distraction seizes then my soul.
I saw the ranks, along the heath,
Thinn'd by the gradual stroke of death,

The battle's faint but dreadful close
 I saw, as feebler groans arose.
 The spirits of the mournful slain
 Awhile flew hovering o'er the plain,
 Then soar'd to Heaven, new life to share,
 And mingled with the angels there.

From a numerous collection of poetical exercises, sometimes the effusions of a vacant, and sometimes of an anxious mind, the five following pieces are chosen: the Inscriptions and the Fragment for their brevity; the Ode and the Idyl, because, like the foregoing Translations of Welsh Poetry, they are written in the lyrical measure.

NOON: AN IDYL.

Written at Landough, in August, 1780.

BURNING Noon prevails on high:
 To the rocky shade I fly.
 Weak the breeze, and faint the flowers;
 Languor rules the sultry hours.
 Scarce a zephyr on the hill,
 Scarce a murmur from the rill,
 From the peopled groves around
 Scarce is hear'd one tuneful sound.
 The herdman drives his panting team
 To loiter in the alder'd stream,
 And seeks himself the woodland cell:
 Echo faints along the dell.
 The poet tries the wonted strain,
 And calls the drooping Muse in vain,

E

And,

And, sunk beneath the solar blaze,
 Forgets the dreams of golden days.
 Vain Pleasure yields, and longs to die;
 Ambition's heaven-aspiring eye
 Is clos'd; and thro' each vein that flows
 All Nature feels a dead repose——
 All but Love: his active soul
 Nor clime nor season can controul.
 He joys, when fervent hours invite,
 To tread the paths of green delight;
 To bask amid the summer vales,
 And languish with the dying gales,
 While from the noontide throne of day
 Prone descends the streaming ray.

O D E T O L O V E.

YOUNG Love, no more I sing thy praise,
 Thou tyrant of my early days,
 Descending with ungenerous art
 To wound a youth's unguarded heart,
 Nor seldom wont to bring with thee
 Sleepless, bleeding Jealousy.

Now if, thus plac'd beyond thy reach,
 What fancy prompts or books can teach
 With curious thirst my mind enquires,
 And the pale lamp too soon expires;
 Now on my brow sit thought and care,
 Laugh at thy arts, and drive thee far.
 My cautious heart denies thee room,
 Tho' bold with solitude thou come.

Or when I follow thro' the shades
 Echo and Silence, sister maids,
 And every Harmony that roves
 The quiet of poetic groves;
 If the blest Muse hath sprinkled me
 With holy drops of Castaly,
 With thee I pass the sportive day
 And with thy flames securely play,
 As whilom thou, in courts above,
 Handling the fiery bolts of Jove.

INSCRIPTION.

AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.

HERE where the oak, with mighty arms
 outspread,
 Lifts his romantic arch above my head,
 While yet each gladdening prospect autumn yields,
 And streams a mellowing lustre o'er the fields,
 While fainter gleams the blue horizon bound,
 As mild and pensive evening closes round,
 Serenely shelter'd from the gentle shower,
 Here let me sit, and muse the lonely hour.

INSCRIPTION.

Written by Moon light.

FAIR Cynthia, shall thy radiance fill the sky,
 Mark'd by the glance of no poetic eye?
 And shine but to the herds, that, widely spread,
 Of thee unconscious graze the dewy mead?
 Or to the silent groves and quivering streams,
 Borrowing new beauties from thy modest beams?
 Or brook that travels the deserted vale,
 Answering in murmurs the sweet nightingale?

THE

THE EXTRAVAGANT WISH.

A FRAGMENT.

BEAUTY and love still thro' the thorny paths
 Of science I pursue. Hopes of my youth,
 At distance seen, they lead me on to tasks
 Of high adventure. Like this lamp that cheers
 My midnight studies, and dispels the gloom,
 They cheer the labours of my early days.
 To gain their gifts, if fortune must be gain'd,
 Fortune to seek my pride will not refuse.
 But from the haunts where tears repentant flow,
 And lewdness riots in the waste of youth,
 Far be my steps; nor ever let me tinge
 My lips too deeply with the juicy grape.
 Still be my mind, on serious joys intent,
 Scornful of those, the votaries of chance,
 Who fly themselves, and, gaming, waste the hours;
 Nor envious of the carle, whose slumbrous head
 Leans on the pillow of inglorious ease.
 Yet will I not neglect to win the praise
 Of every manly, every pleasing art
 That decks th' exterior, and the soul expands,
 And gains an easier passage to the fair:
 Girt with the belt-hung sword and crimson scarf,
 To march the foremost in the ranks of war;
 To pour the magic sounds of eloquence,

While courts and senates catch them as they fall;
 To lead with easy step the airy dance,
 And graceful in the minuet's mazes move;
 To tune the voice, to breathe the melting flute,
 And touch the string, till the full waving tide
 Of music roll upon the ravish'd sense.

* * *

NOTES.

N O T E S.

P. 1. **L**EWELLIN (son of Griffith) last of the Welsh princes, in the early part of his life, gave Edward I. a personal overthrow in the marches, which that king's revengeful spirit never forgave. He conceived a lasting hatred of him, which he pursued through every reverse of fortune with an unrelenting severity. An accident gave him that advantage over the Welsh prince, which his valour and conduct were unable to obtain. Elinor, daughter of the earl of Leicester, who resided in a nunnery at Montargis in France, and who was betrothed to Lewellin, sailing for Wales with her brother Almeric, was taken off the isles of Scilly by four ships from Bristol, and imprisoned in the castles of Corfe and Shirburn. Edward, who knew Lewellin's extreme love of Elinor, made this advantage the ground of very humiliating conditions, to which the Welsh prince acceded. This treaty, by which Elinor was restored to her lover, granted to Edward an enormous tribute and an extensive tract of the Welsh territory, with homage for the mutilated part which remained to Lewellin; and admitted English lords into the bosom of North Wales. The Welsh, impoverished and weakened by this cruel bondage, and heavily oppressed by their new masters, revolted: an unequal struggle ensued, which terminated in the death of the prince, and

and the entire subjection of Wales to the crown of England.

P. 10. l. 23. The battle of Mailor, fought with the English in the 12th century, by Owain Cyveiliog, prince of Powis, who composed the admired poem called *Hirlas*, or the Drinking Horn, on the victory he obtained.

Ibid. l. 24. The battle of the Britons and Saxons at Bangor Is Coed, in the 7th century.

Ibid. l. 26. "Before the prince himself there was vast confusion, havock, conflict, honourable death, bloody battle, horrible consternation, and upon Tal Moelvre a thousand banners." Panegyric on Owain Gwyneth. Evans's Specimens, p. 26.

P. 11. l. 21, 24, 25. Taliesin and Aneirin, both distinguished by the title of King of Bards, flourished in the 6th century. Near the same period lived Merlinus Sylvestris, or Merlin the Wild, who having accidentally slain his grandson, suffered a temporary loss of his intellects, and concealed himself in the woods of Scotland, where during an interval of recollection he composed his beautiful poem, the Orchard, which is strongly tinged with the enthusiasm of madness.

P. 12. l. 5. Iölo the Red wrote about the year 1400.

Ibid. l. 8. David, the son of Gwilim, flourished nearly at the same period. His patron was Ivor the Generous. He is an elegant and pathetic writer of elegiac odes, for by that name, I think, the Welsh *Cywyddau* may often be not improperly described. The Reverend Mr. Powell, of Lanharan in Glamorganshire, possesses a valuable manuscript collection of the works of this poet, the titles of some of which are enumerated by Mr. Edward Llwyd in his *Archæologia*.

Ibid.

Ibid. l. 11. We read in the Laws of Howel the Good, that when a Welsh prince was in the field, it was the duty of his domestic bard, before an engagement, to sing in the presence of the prince and his army a very ancient poem, called Unbennaeth Prydain, the Monarchy of Britain. Dr. Wotton, the learned editor of Howel's Laws, in a note on this passage, conjectures that the title and subject only were prescribed, and that the choice and composition of the poetry was left to the bard. The Welsh, says he, always preserved a tradition, that the whole island had once been possessed by their ancestors, who were driven into a corner of it by their Saxon invaders. When they ravaged the English borders, they dignified their incursions with the pretext of recovering their hereditary rights. Their poets, therefore, entertained them with descriptions and praises of the splendor and courage with which the monarchy of Britain was maintained by its ancient heroes, and inspired them with an ardour of emulating their glorious example. If any thing can be added to the conjectures of so discerning a critic as Dr. Wotton, it is, that, probably, an excellent old poem, called Unbennaeth Prydain, was constantly recited in the field, and accompanied by a tune of the same antiquity, till, by a long interval of peace, or some other accident, they were both forgotten; and that afterwards the bards supplied what had been lost from their own inventions.

The Germans, says Tacitus, when they march to battle, animate themselves with singing the verses of the bards, and in these songs confidently predict the fortune of the day.

F

But

Ibid.

But heed, ye bards, that for the sign of onset
 Ye found the ancientest of all your rhymes,
 Whose birth tradition notes not, nor who fram'd
 Its lofty strains: the force of that high air
 Did Julius feel, when, fir'd by it, our fathers
 First drove him recreant to his ships; and ill
 Had far'd his second landing, but that fate
 Silenc'd the master bard, who led the song.

MASON'S Caractacus.

Ibid. l. 18. The captive Welsh nobles, either hostages or prisoners of war, who were detained in the Tower of London, obtained permission that their libraries should be sent them from Wales, to amuse them in their solitude and confinement. This was a frequent practice, so that in process of time the Tower became the principal repository of Welsh literature. The present poverty of ancient Welsh manuscripts may be dated from the time when the History and Poetry of our country received a fatal blow in the loss of those collected at London, by the villainy of one Scolan, who burned them. Of this modern Amru no other memorial remains, than his name and the infamy of this action. The following passage is translated from a poem written in 1450.

The books of Cambria, and their villainous
 destroyer,
 Were concealed in the White Tower.
 Curfed was the deed of Scolan,
 Who committed them in a pile to the flames.

The

The Tower of London is frequently called the White Tower in the works of the Welsh bards, and part of it still retains that appellation.

Also during the insurrections of "the irregular and wild Glendore," the manuscripts then extant of the ancient British learning and poetry were so scattered and destroyed, "that there escaped not one (as William Salesbury relates) that was not incurably maimed, and irrecoverably torn and mangled."

P. 14. The Elegy on Nest, The Praises of Lewellin the Great, and the Ode of the Months, are imitations of Welsh poems published and translated in Mr. Evans's well-known Specimens.

Ibid. l. 1. Nest, in the language of the Manks, signifies Brightness, or the Moon, or Diana.—Gwalchmai is the Welsh word for *The Hawk of May*, probably because the person so named was born in that month.

P. 16. l. 4. Dewi is the Welsh name of St. David.

P. 17. The prosperous reign of Lewellin the son of Iorwerth began in 1194, and ended with his death in 1240.

Ibid. l. 1. The Welsh bards, like the poets of the East, frequently open and conclude their performances with a fine strain of piety. The bard of the palace was enjoined by the Welsh laws to begin his compositions with the praises of the Almighty, and then to celebrate his prince.

Ibid. l. 6. Mr. Gray has beautifully translated some passages of the Gododin, from the Specimens published by Mr. Evans. If we except the remains of Greece and Rome, it is perhaps the most ancient poem in the world that has reached our times.

P. 17.

P. 17. l. 8. Venedotia, North Wales.

Ibid. l. 10. A mountain in Montgomeryshire.

P. 18. l. 2. When the horn, called Udcorn, was sounded, the army gave a shout, which was the signal of battle.

Ibid. l. 8. The scenes of Lewellin's victories are here enumerated.

Ibid. l. 26. In the works of the Welsh bards, ships are sometimes called the horses of the sea: this poetical expression is here used to signify the waves.

P. 20. l. 16. Owen Cyveiliog, the warlike prince of Powis, calls himself the chief of the men of Mochnant, a district of that region, in his poem on the battle of Mailor.

P. 21. The following account of the subject of this Ode is taken from Mr. Vaughan's notes on Caradoc's History of Wales.

Sir Griffith Loyd was a valiant gentleman, but unfortunate; *magnæ quidem sed calamitosæ virtutis*, as Florus says of Sertorius. He was knighted by king Edward at Rythlan, where a parliament was held, when he brought news of the queen's safe delivery of a prince at Carnarvon castle. Sir Griffith afterwards observing the extreme oppression which the English lords exercised on his unhappy countrymen, was so disquieted that he broke into open rebellion, verifying that saying of Solomon, 'Oppression maketh a wise man mad.' Being desperate, he put himself at the head of all the forces he could collect, and, like a candle that gives a sudden blaze before it goes out, quickly over-ran all North Wales and the marches, taking all the castles and holds: but to little purpose; for he was soon after met by the English, his party discomfited, and himself taken prisoner. This was in the year 1322. 7 JU 52

